

Message

**From:** Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=3C5A111DC377411595E5B24B5D96146B-ORME-ZA VALETA, JENNIFER]  
**Sent:** 4/25/2018 4:31:02 PM  
**To:** Blackburn, Elizabeth [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=a080eb90549a453aaa6a357f5257c0b7-Blackburn, Elizabeth]  
**CC:** Robbins, Chris [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=958b4b78eb42457eacf53514e428efd6-Robbins, Chris]; Rodan, Bruce [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=Rodan, Bruce]  
**Subject:** RE: Scientists say they want open data — but not Pruitt's plan

I have asked Megan to set up a mtg w Fred, Tina and Bruce so we can begin thinking of how we would implement this w/in ORD

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**From:** Blackburn, Elizabeth  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 25, 2018 8:14 AM  
**To:** Radzikowski, Mary Ellen <Radzikowski.Maryellen@epa.gov>; Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer <Orme-Zavaleta.Jennifer@epa.gov>; Robbins, Chris <Robbins.Chris@epa.gov>; Hubbard, Carolyn <Hubbard.Carolyn@epa.gov>; Rodan, Bruce <rodan.bruce@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Scientists say they want open data — but not Pruitt's plan

## Scientists say they want open data — but not Pruitt's plan

Scott Waldman, E&E News reporter  
Published: Wednesday, April 25, 2018



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt spoke at agency headquarters earlier this month. Andrew Harnik/Associated Press

Scientists are worried that EPA's new plan to increase transparency will undermine it instead.

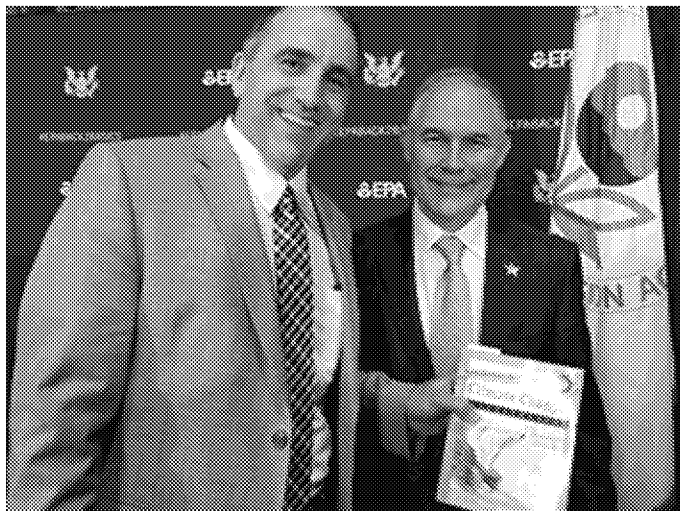
EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt yesterday unveiled a long-awaited plan to require that EPA studies used in future regulations must have open and transparent data. Pruitt said the proposed rule is part of his larger effort to dramatically reform the way science is used at the agency, which also included the removal of Science Advisory Board members who received EPA grants and were replaced with industry-friendly researchers.

"The science we use is going to be transparent, it's going to be reproducible, it's going to be able to be analyzed by those in the marketplace, and those that watch what we do can make informed decisions about whether we've drawn the proper conclusions or not," Pruitt said yesterday at EPA headquarters.

But some of the biggest critics of Pruitt's plans are scientists who say they've already been working to boost transparency for years.

Researchers have long grappled with how to make the peer-review process more accessible, how to make more research replicable and how to better share data, said Gretchen Goldman, research director for the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Scientists are always discussing ways to make their work more transparent, accessible and instructive for the community at large, Goldman added. The proposed EPA rule establishes a set of political hoops for researchers that will take more of their time, she said. And many won't be able or willing to devote more effort to the additional red tape put up by Pruitt.



Blogger Marc Morano presented his book, "The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change," to Pruitt yesterday. Morano/Twitter

"This is not about all of the details that scientists need to scrutinize each other's work. That information is already widely available, and scientists spend a tremendous amount of time disclosing all of their data and methods to get their work published," she said. "This is adding additional burdens; it's not the information that is required for appropriate peer review and reproducibility of studies. This is clearly just a political move."

Scientists and leading scientific organizations were largely excluded from EPA's process in formulating the proposed rule. EPA also shut out reporters from its transparency announcement yesterday as it welcomed industry allies who have long pushed for deregulation in Washington, D.C. The audience allowed into the event, visible on a livestream of the 15-minute presentation, included a core group of those who deny mainstream climate science and who have worked to tear down climate regulations. In addition to House Science, Space and

Technology Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas), the audience included Will Happer, an emeritus physics professor at Princeton University and possible candidate to be Trump's science adviser; Marc Morano, who runs a climate science denial website; Steve Milloy, a Trump EPA transition team member; and Myron Ebell of the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Richard Shiffrin, a professor of cognitive science at Indiana University, Bloomington, thinks what's needed is just minor tuning to the scientific research process, not a full-scale overhaul, he said recently at the National Academy of Sciences. There is an entire cottage industry that focuses on the problems of science, which creates the false public impression that much needs to be fixed, he said.

"The fact that we're talking about solutions still puts the focus on problems that we're trying to solve," he said in an interview with E&E News. "It's as if science is broken, so the public and Congress and the president and everyone else gets the impression that things are falling apart because scientists themselves keep talking about how bad things are and how things need to be fixed. Well, that's not true; things are going incredibly well, so I think that we have to change the narrative and make it clear to the public that science is advancing so rapidly that we can't even keep up."

In a press release yesterday, EPA cited the editorial policies of *Nature* and *Science* magazines as a justification for its proposed rule. Rush Holt, CEO of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and publisher of the *Science* family of journals, said it is dedicated to having as much peer-reviewed information as possible, while the proposed rule is just the opposite. He said EPA's effort is in the name of transparency but will shut out invaluable and necessary research that informs regulations that save lives.

"Its effect will be and maybe its intention is to be able to exclude inconvenient scientific evidence without acknowledging that it has been excluded," he said. "In other words, they'll say, 'We didn't exclude that because it doesn't qualify' so they don't have to explain that they ever excluded it, so that's just the opposite of transparency."

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## **Pruitt allies warn of 'crisis' in science**

Critics argue that Pruitt's plan would prevent the use of groundbreaking studies, including those that draw on decades of research that links air pollution to human health. At the same time, it would allow the use of studies, including those conducted by Science Advisory Board members selected by Pruitt and funded by the American Petroleum Institute, that downplay health risks of air pollution (*Climatewire*, April 11).

The proposed rule would allow some data to avoid public scrutiny, as it carved out an exemption for industry data that is considered confidential business information, something the chemical industry has sought.

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas, ranking Democrat on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, called Pruitt's proposal an "insidious plan" designed to hamstring the ability of EPA to protect public health. She has fought efforts by her GOP colleague Smith to get a version of the proposed rule passed into law for years.

"Republicans weren't able to get their 'secret science' bills signed into law, but now they have Administrator Pruitt to do the bidding of industry at the EPA," she said in a statement. "This rule isn't about 'scientific transparency.' It's about undermining public health and the environment."

Smith has pushed such legislation for years, arguing that it would make EPA's work more transparent. Smith has alleged that EPA uses "secret science," and he has accused government researchers of fraud. At the agency headquarters yesterday, he said the new regulation is in response to a larger scientific discussion.

"Many in the scientific community agree that increased access to data is essential for reproducibility and objective analysis," he said. "Open access to scientific data fosters good policymaking. The American people have a right to understand how and why regulatory decisions are made."

In a House office building last week, Smith feted a group of researchers from the National Association of Scholars who routinely attack climate science and who say in a new report that there is a "crisis" in science because too much of it cannot be reproduced. The authors of its new report, titled "The Irreproducibility Crisis of Modern Science," say government agencies should establish review commissions to determine which existing regulations are based on reproducible research and to rescind those that are not, a process that could affect key provisions of the Clean Air Act, among other regulations.

"A reproducibility crisis afflicts a wide range of scientific and social-scientific disciplines, from epidemiology to social psychology," they wrote. "Improper research techniques, lack of accountability, disciplinary and political groupthink, and a scientific culture biased toward producing positive results together have produced a critical state of affairs."

The group has long cast doubt on established and mainstream climate science. The National Association of Scholars, tax filings show, has received hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding from the Charles Koch Foundation as well as the Sarah Scaife Foundation, both of which have supported attacks on climate science. The afterword of the report was written by Happer of Princeton.

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